A Systematic Narrative Review of International Posture: What is Known and What Needs to be Known.

ABSTRACT

Research investigating motivational variables in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is large and varied. An emerging variable, International Posture, can be summarised as a revised form of Gardner's (1985) construct of integrativeness, updated by Yashima (2002). To further the understanding of International Posture, a systematic review of the literature was conducted. Data from 66 studies were extracted and four themes emerged from the literature, namely the design/definition of International Posture, the measures used to quantify International Posture, its position within the nomological network of language learning motivation and its purported malleability. The narrative review discusses each theme with a specific focus on future research needed. Overall, International Posture was found to be a valid and useful variable in explaining directly the motivation and indirectly the proficiency of the EFL learner, although further research is needed to confirm the underlying design and measurement intent of the variable.

Keywords: International Posture, English as a Foreign Language, global englishes, language learning motivation

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Globalisation has created an increasing need to communicate with others outside of one's own country. This cross-border communication need has been met more and more with the use of English, which can by now be considered a global language (Crystal, 2003). This rise in the use of English has not been driven by the need of non-native speakers to communicate with native speakers, but rather as a common communication tool between individuals from all language groups (Ushioda, 2006).

The spread of English across the world has been such that it is commonly assumed that non-native speakers of English outnumber native speakers (Bolton, 2002), which raises the question of ownership of the language. As English usage increases and takes on its own form in non-native contexts, it was stated that "English no longer exclusively represents the culture and nationality of native English-speaking countries" (Sung, 2013, p. 377). In addition, when the subject of ownership of the English language has been broached with non-native learners, it has been found that many of these learners do not believe that English belongs to any one native English-speaking country or group (Lai, 2013). This recent notion of non-ownership of a language has created a necessity to re-examine the fundamental theories on which the motivational literature of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning is based.

Gardner's (1985) influential socio-educational model of second language acquisition (see Figure 2) stated that when an additional language is learnt, the learner may be motivated by 'integrativeness' – a need to meet and communicate with members of the language community. However, in the case of English as an 'ownerless language', or as a language without any one

specific, identifiable 'owner' - there is no specific community with which language learners can aspire to meet and communicate (Yashima, 2002).

Yashima (2002) addressed this problem with the introduction of International Posture. International Posture is conceptualized to replace the motivational desire to meet and communicate with a specific language community with an imagined international community. This desire to communicate with an imagined community may prove to be a useful motivator within EFL learning, as International Posture has been positively linked, directly or indirectly, to several desirable outcomes in language learning motivation such as Willingness to Communicate (Yashima, 2002; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004), Ideal L2 (Second language) Self (Kormos & Csizér, 2008), and language proficiency (Yashima, 2002; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide & Shimizu 2004). International Posture can therefore be seen as a positive motivational construct that is beneficial for the language learning student to have. In addition, the inclusion of International Posture in motivational studies of language learning may provide an important additional insight into the impetus to learn in the EFL context. Research conducted on International Posture during the last decade has increased the understanding of the motivating power of an imagined international community and results in terms of outcome variables are promising. However, a clear consensus of the definition and measurement of International Posture is lacking, as well as a clear understanding of the antecedents of the variable.

In this article, the authors conducted a systematic literature review in order to collate and evaluate the development and measurement of International Posture, its position in the nomological network of language learning motivation and its distinctiveness as a construct in an attempt to review and address the current gaps in the literature. The research questions guiding the literature search can be summarised as follows:

1.   What is the working definition of International Posture and how has it been

        developed and designed?

2.   What instruments are used to measure and quantify International Posture?

3.   What position does International Posture hold within the nomological network of

         language learning motivation?

4.   Is International Posture malleable?

The aim of the review is to develop a comprehensive understanding of International Posture and its role in English language learning through summarising the existing literature. In addition, the summarised literature is also aimed towards providing a useful guide for the direction of future research.

METHODS

Search Strategy

A comprehensive narrative review of the literature was conducted using four computerised databases (PsychINFO, PsychARTICLES, ERIC and Google Scholar). The search and review strategy utilised in this study followed the PRISMA guidelines (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, Altman, & The PRISMA Group, 2009). Articles published in English in peer-reviewed journals as well as dissertations submitted for PhD level degrees that included some measure or mention of International Posture were identified through the keywords ("*International Posture*" AND "*Language learning*").

The search was conducted in November 2018 and resulted in 1575 articles being identified through the use of the keywords. 194 duplicates were removed and 1381 article titles and abstracts were read for relevance to the research questions. In total, 83 articles were selected for review as

mention was made to the definition, measurement or malleability of International Posture and/or International Posture was included in a multi-variable study. Articles were excluded from the study if no empirical finding of International Posture was made, as the focus of the current study is on the empirical design, measurement, and nomological network of International Posture. Therefore, 17 articles non-empricial studies were excluded for being out of scope of the study. The selection process used for this study, that resulted in 66 articles being included in the review, can be seen in Figure 1.
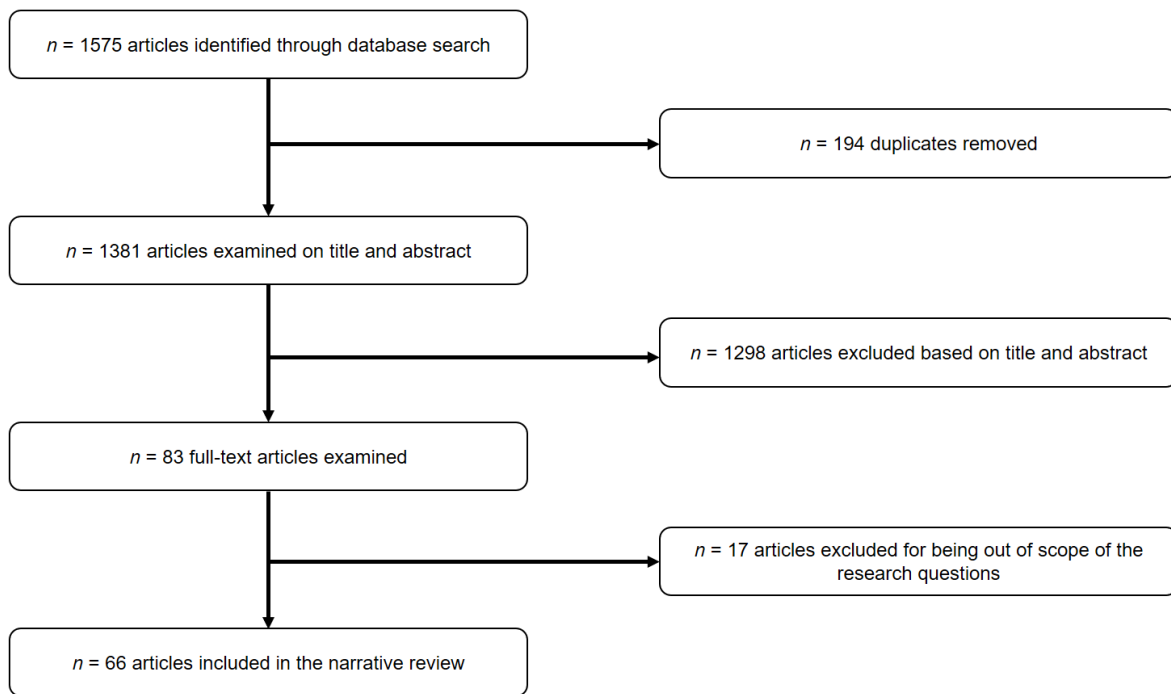

Figure 1. Selection process for narrative review.

Review Strategy

Article titles, main findings, variables measured and type of International Posture measure used were extracted from the 66 articles identified in the literature search and entered into a spreadsheet. Data sorting occurred on the basis of the research questions, with multiple studies

providing information on more than one research question. All applicable results were extracted from the 66 research studies. A specific focus was additionally placed on tabulating all variables with significant relationships with International Posture in order to establish the nomological network. Moreover, all variants of measures used to measure International Posture was noted. A full list of the 66 articles included in the review can be found as supplementary material at https://osf.io/.

The research questions and subsequent literature review yielded four areas of focus for this study: The development and design of International Posture, the measures used to quantify the variable, its nomological network and its malleability in the English language classroom. All four of these focus points are to be discussed within the narrative review, with an emphasis placed on known gaps within the existing literature.

FROM INTEGRATIVENESS TO INTERNATIONAL POSTURE

In Gardner's (1985) socio-educational model of second language acquisition (see Figure 2), a distinction is made between the instrumental and integrative motivation in second language acquisition. 'Instrumental motivation' of a language learner represents the motive to learn a language in order to achieve a tangible goal or reward, where this goal or reward may be a class grade, a test score or any other concrete outcome. For instance, Gardner and MacIntyre (1991) operationalized 'instrumental motivation' by offering $10 for a superior grade in a language test. However, 'integrative motivation' includes the concepts of motivation, learning attitude and 'integrativeness', where integrativeness can be defined as the extent to which the language learner identifies with the target language group (Gardner, 1985). The integrative motivation is therefore the motivation of the language learner to assimilate within the target language group and does not represent the motivation of the language learning to achieve any specific, tangible goal or reward.
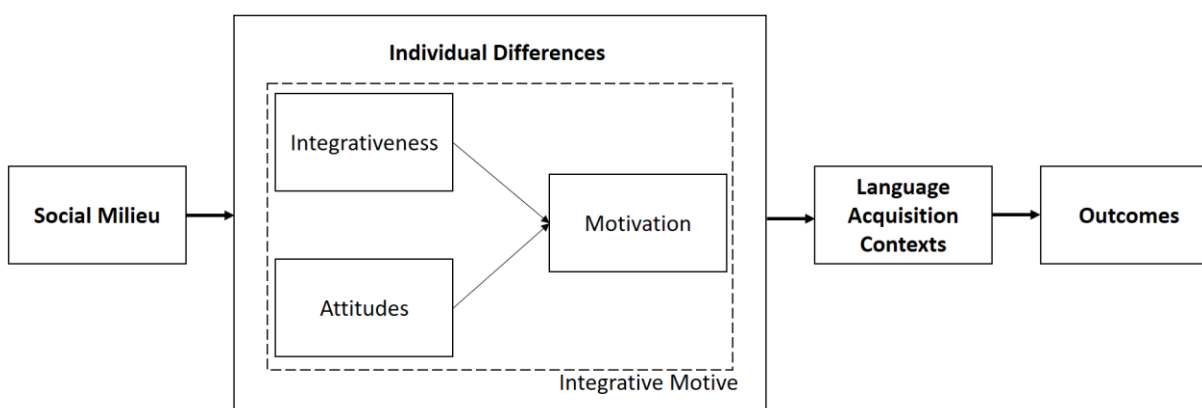
Figure 2. Operational formulation of the 1985 Socio-Educational Model. Adapted from *Social Psychology and Second Language Learning: The Role of Attitudes and Motivation* (p. 153), by R. C. Gardner, 1985, London: Hodder Arnold.

As far as EFL learning is concerned, studies examining the role of integrativeness in explaining language learning motivation showed contradictory/mixed results. Several international studies have found integrativeness to be a rather weak or non-existent motivational factor in the EFL context, including Taiwan (Warden & Lin, 2000), South Africa (Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2002), Botswana (Magogwe, 2007), Japan (Irie, 2003; Yashima, 2002), and Hungary (Kormos & Csizér, 2008; Nikolov, 1999). However, the concept has found to be a meaningful factor for EFL learning in several empirical studies of language motivation research (see MacIntyre, Baker, Clemént & Donovan, 2002; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996), frequently with samples in Canada with the goal of acquiring French as a second language. The transferability of the concept of integrativeness from the Canadian French L2 context to a global EFL context can therefore be seen as questionable.

In addition, the distinction between the instrumental and integrative motivations have also been problematic in the EFL context. Gao et al. (2004) and Kimura et al. (2001) found that English learners' motivation in China and Japan respectively, were more complex than the juxtaposition of integrative and instrumental orientations allowed for. In a qualitative study, Lamb (2004) found

no distinction between the two constructs in EFL learners in Indonesia and suggested that the two concepts should be considered in unison. The integrative motive may therefore be problematic when considered as a separate EFL learning motivational factor, but may provide insight into the motivational process when considered in conjunction with the instrumental motive.

Yashima (2002) addressed the concerns regarding integrativeness and the differentiation between the instrumental and integrative motives through the conceptualization of International Posture. International Posture includes both friendship and vocational interests, and thus combines the integrative and instrumental orientation into a single construct. International Posture is defined as an "interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to stay or work, readiness to interact with intercultural partners, and openness or a non-ethnocentric attitude toward different cultures" (Yashima, 2002, p. 57). Beyond Gardner's (1985) original construct of integrativeness, Yashima also drew inspiration from Norton's (2001) concept of the imagined community. In the EFL learning context, learners who have high International Posture will envision an imagined international community that they can belong to and participate in through the learning and use of English. Furthermore, by having this concept of participating in the imagined community as a long-term goal for EFL learners, the problematic objective of achieving native fluency is replaced with the objective of achieving fluency to the extent were one can communicate internationally.

The emphasis on English as the intended target language used to participate in the imagined international community, and thus inherent to the definition of International Posture ought also to be stressed. Several studies have been conducted where International Posture has been attributed as a motivational variable to language learners acquiring a language other than English. Studies have included Spanish (Anderson, 2012), Arabic (Kong et al., 2018), Mandarin (Lee, 2018; Xie,

2011), Japanese and Korean (Siridetkoon, 2015) as the intended target language. The core concepts that led to the development of International Posture as a variable, namely the lack of support for the integrative motive in the EFL context as well as the concept of imagined international communities, rests on the inclusion of English and its position as a global language. To extend the motivation of International Posture to the learning of other languages implies that these languages share a similar position to English as a global language and can also not be associated with a specific nationality or culture – an implication that would need to be supported by the research literature on the language in question. In turn, language learners acquiring a language associated with a specific culture or nationality may have a motivation to specifically communicate and form part of this language community, however this motive describes the concept of integrativeness and not International Posture as the authors define the concept within this article.

Thus, based on the articles included within this narrative review, International Posture can be seen as a revised form of Gardner's (1985) construct of integrativeness, updated to reflect the unique situation of English as a global language where the integrative and instrumental orientations cannot be differentiated and where the target group to integrate into has changed from a specific native-speaking group to an abstract international community.

MEASURES OF INTERNATIONAL POSTURE

Several measurements have been used over the past decade and a half in the operationalization of International Posture. These diverse measures indicate that the conceptualization of the variable differs greatly from one research study to the next. The following section will provide an overview of questionnaires used to measure International Posture and provide commentary on the lack of consensus in terms of the structure of International Posture.

International Posture was first measured by Yashima (2002) as part of a study examining Willingness to Communicate in the Japanese EFL context. The questionnaire used attempted to capture the motivational desire to meet and communicate with English speakers and form part of an imagined international community. The multi-dimensional construct of International Posture was quantified through four subscales, namely *intercultural friendship orientation*, *interest in foreign affairs*, *intergroup approach-avoidance tendency*, and *interest in international vocation/activities*.

However, the operationalisation of International Posture has undergone three major changes in the work of Tomoko Yashima (see Yashima, 2009; Yashima et al., 2004, Yashima, 2002), as the theoretical foundations and multi-dimensionality of the variable became clearer through additional research (see Table 1). Major changes include the removal of the *intercultural friendship orientation* subscale in the 2004 and 2009 measures, as well as the increase in reliability of *interest in foreign affairs* in the 2009 measure – which is likely due to the expansion of the number of items in the subscale from two to four. In addition, the 2009 updated questionnaire also expanded the measure to include another fourth subscale: *Having something to communicate to the world.* Yashima (2009) found that the urge to communicate to the perceived international community is tied to the EFL learner's interest in communicating on a certain topic or opinion.

Table 1

Measures of International Posture in the work of Yashima

Subscale	Yashima (2002)	Yashima et al. (2004)	Yashima (2009)
Intercultural Friendship Orientation	α = .85	-	-
Interest in Foreign Affairs	α = .67	α = .63	α = .76*
Intergroup Approach-Avoidance Tendency	α = .79	α = .73	α = .80
Interest in International Vocation/Activities	α = .73	α = .62	α = .79
Having Something to Communicate	-	-	α = .78

Note: The number of items in the subscale increased from 2 to 4 in the Yashima (2009) measure.

α = measure of internal consistency.

Most notable however, is the change in the measurement model of International Posture within the 2009 measure, with Yashima (2009) proposing that 'the four subscales represent different manifestations of International Posture' (p. 156). These different manifestations can be categorized into an *attitudinal/behavioural propensity* and a *knowledge orientation* of the EFL learner towards the international community (see Figure 3).
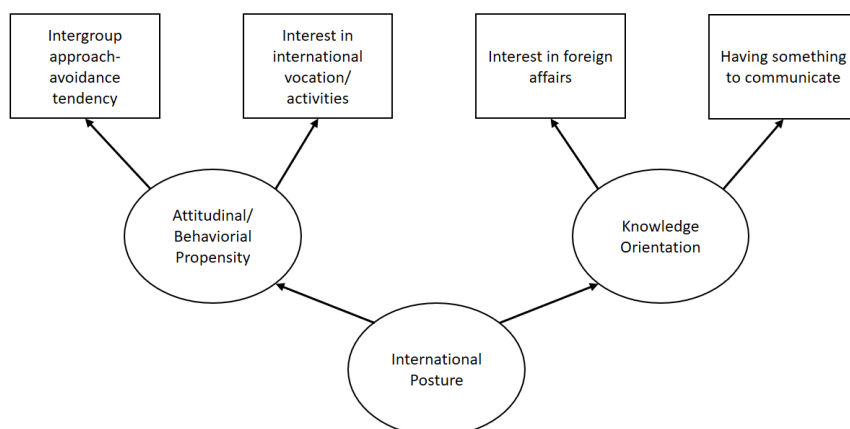
Figure 3. Operationalization of International Posture. Adapted from "Motivation, Language Learning and the L2 Self" by Z. Dörnyei and E. Ushioda (Eds.), *International Posture and the Ideal L2 Self in the Japanese EFL Context* (Yashima, p. 157), 2009, Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

The changes made to the measurement of International Posture in the work of Yashima may limit the comparability of the findings across studies that use the different versions of these measures. This in turn may result in differences in the nomological network of International Posture, depending on the measure used.

Other attempts have been made to develop a measure of International Posture separate from the work of Tomoko Yashima. These questionnaires include a smaller number of total items, no specific subscales or clear structure of the multi-dimensionality of International Posture as proposed in Yashima (2009) (see Ali, Wyatt, & Van Laar, 2015; Csizér & Kormos, 2009; Weger, 2013).

Csizér and Kormos (2009) define their scale of International Posture as "students' attitudes to English as an international language" (p.103) and includes items such as "I would like to be able to communicate with people from other countries" (p. 117). The items of this scale seem to clearly measure an attitudinal motivational construct regarding the use and prevalence of English

internationally as determined by the language student. The construct does not seem to address several of the multidimensional aspects of International Posture, as defined by Yashima (2009), including *interest in international vocation/activities* and *interest in international news*. Instead, the construct can be likened to the more uni-dimensional subscale of *intercultural friendship orientation* - which was included in the Yashima (2002) measure of International Posture and included items such as "Learning English will allow me to get to know various cultures and peoples" (p. 66).

The scale proposed by Ali et al. (2015) measures a construct named "International Posture and Learning L2 for Local Purposes" with items derived from an exploratory factor analysis. This variable shares similarities with the scale of Csizér and Kormos (2009) and the *intercultural friendship orientation* subscale of Yashima (2002) in that it also focuses on building international sociocultural relationships. Yet, the variable considers the sociocultural friendship potential of English in both the national and international context for the English language learner through including items such as "I want to learn English to travel to non-native English speaking countries for work" and "I want to learn English to interact with people in my country" in the same scale (Ali et al., 2015, p. 81). English is therefore seen in this context as a communicative tool within borders and across borders – which differs from the hypothesis of the variable as proposed by Yashima (2002; 2009) as a purely international lingua franca.

The items proposed by Weger (2013) were also the result of an exploratory factor analysis on L2 motivational questionnaires, with the majority of items analysed deriving from the longitudinal work of Dörnyei, Csizér and Németh (2006). This measurement of International Posture defines the construct as a "broad desire for multilingualism" in both a general and work specific context (Weger, 2013, p. 94). Items included in this scale are "I would like to get to know

more Americans" and "After I finish learning English, I would like to start learning another language" (p. 96). The items do suggest a multidimensionality to the variable of International Posture, yet still differs from the Yashima (2009) postulation in that a broader construct of multilingualism, which includes English yet extends beyond just English as lingua franca, is included in the definition. In addition, the Yashima (2009) subscales of *having something to communicate to the world* and *interest in international news* does not seem to be represented in this measurement of International Posture.

An additional concern regarding the measurement of International Posture is the practice of including the measure in models of motivation along with separate measures of instrumental and integrative motivation. Yashima (2004) indicated that International Posture comprises the dual goals of learning English – the utilitarian goal of mastering the language for instrumental reasons and the integrative goal of mastering the language in order to communicate internationally. The dual concepts of instrumental and integrative orientations within one construct is fundamental to the definition and development of International Posture. Yet, several research studies have been conducted where International Posture is hypothesized to be a separate motivating factor from instrumental motivation and/or integrative motivation (see Kormos & Csizér, 2008, 2014; Munezane, 2013; Xie, 2011). These models further confound the intention of the design of International Posture and may create additional issues in terms of the discriminant validity of the variables in question. Clarity regarding the measurement of International Posture and its separation and/or inclusion of integrative and instrumental orientations is therefore needed. The diverse measures of International Posture indicate that the conceptualization of the variable differs greatly from one research study to the next. This complicates comparisons between studies where

International Posture forms part of the larger nomological network of English language learning motivation as there is no clear consensus in terms of the structure of the variable.

NOMOLOGICAL NETWORK OF INTERNATIONAL POSTURE

Although a relatively new variable within language acquisition motivational research, several studies over the past decade have shed light on the possible antecedents and interrelationships of International Posture and other motivational language acquisition constructs. The following section will detail the variables indicated in the nomological network of International Posture, with emphasis placed on known gaps in the literature and implications for future research.

Antecedents

Demographic Factors

Demographic factors have been found to explain significant variance in the motivational variables in foreign language learning studies, as well as in the acquisition of foreign languages (see Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015, for a comprehensive overview). International Posture has to some extent indicated differences across demographic factors, with differences in scores being found for gender, age and socio-economic situations.

Gender differences in International Posture scores were only found in two studies that are part of this systematic review. Islam (2013) reported significant differences in scores of males and females in a Pakistani sample, with males scoring significantly higher on International Posture than their female counterparts. In turn, Birdsell (2014) reported that females scored significantly higher on International Posture than males and attributed the finding to the unique cultural expectations of male and female language students of the Japanese sample population used. It may

therefore be that gender differences found in International Posture reflect the cultural environment of the language being learnt to a greater extent than it does true differences between gender groups. However, future research on the impact of gender and the cultural environment on International Posture may provide much needed additional insight.

Age differences have also been noted in regards to International Posture. Kormos and Csizér (2008) reported lower scores for adolescents as compared to university students in their early adulthood and adult language learners. Attributing this difference to the developing self-image of adolescents, further research is required to understand the role of age in the conceptualization of International Posture. It should be noted that no other study could be found that replicated or contrasted these results.

The socio-economic situation (SES) of the English language learner may additionally affect International Posture. In a study of Chilean adolescent EFL learners, Kormos and Kiddle (2013) found a higher International Posture for students of higher SES. As the use of English in a non-native English speaking country may be constrained by the SES of the learner, the motivational factors may be likewise affected. As the majority of studies regarding International Posture sources language learners from high SES schools and universities, the role of SES and International Posture is not yet clear in the available literature.

Due to the low number of studies reporting on demographic differences in the scores of International Posture, no clear conclusion can be drawn regarding whether certain EFL learners would be predisposed towards developing higher and more beneficial levels of International Posture.

Previous Learning Experiences and Learning Attitudes

Beyond demographic factors, the previous language learning experiences and attitudes of language learners have been found to have a medium effect on International Posture.

English learning experiences in both the immediate environment as well as previous learning experiences may influence International Posture. Peng (2015) found that the language learner's satisfaction with the immediate English learning experience significantly predicted International Posture. In addition, several studies have found that previous intercultural contact experience with other speakers of English predicted and/or improved the International Posture of language students (Aubrey & Nowlan, 2013; Nishida & Yashima, 2017; Ockert, 2015a; Yashima & Zenuk-Nishide, 2008). EFL learners who participated in student exchanges or intercultural communication may therefore develop higher levels of International Posture than their stay-at-home compatriots.

Separate from language learning experiences, the language learner's attitude towards the enjoyment and usefulness of English learning has also predicted International Posture (Kormos, Kiddle, & Csizér, 2011). This attitude towards learning English has been found to be a particularly strong predictor of International Posture, as Iwamoto (2011) and Kong et al. (2018) have found medium to large regression coefficients between positive attitude and International Posture. In addition, a handful of studies have found support for the inclusion of personality factors as an antecedent of International Posture. Lin (2018) and Ghonsooly, Khajavy and Asadpour (2012) have both found significant pathways between 'Openness to Experience' and International Posture in a structural model of EFL learning motivation. Lin (2018) also found significant relationships between International Posture and the personality factors of Conscientiousness and Agreeableness, with Fallah and Mashady (2014) providing additional support for the hypothesised relationship

between Agreeableness and International Posture. However, it should be noted that with regards to all personality factors mentioned previously, the standardised regression coefficients were small on an absolute level (β = .16 - .18; p < .05) (Lin, 2018), indicating that personality may be but a minor antecedent of International Posture. Future research clarifying the effect of personality as an antecedent of International Posture is therefore needed.

Given the low number of studies indicating possible antecedents, it becomes evident that the nomological network of International Posture is still relatively unidentified and should be a research priority in order to maximise the benefits of higher International Posture in EFL learners. In particular, it is the opinion of the authors that the expansion of research on the question of gender and the cultural environment, as well as personality, as antecedents of International Posture may be promising areas of future research.

Other Motivational Constructs

The first conceptualization of International Posture in Yashima (2002) involved the inclusion of the construct in a structural model of motivational language acquisition variables. Thereafter, International Posture has been included in numerous studies and models of EFL learning. As such, there is an established nomological network of interrelationships between International Posture and other motivational constructs. Here, Willingness to Communicate, Ideal L2 Self, Motivation to Learn, and proficiency will be discussed as possible positive outcome variables linked to the development of higher International Posture within EFL learners as those were the vairables focused upon in previous research.

Willingness to Communicate

Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in the language being learnt has emerged as an important variable in motivation of language acquisition studies over the past three decades. WTC can be defined as the likelihood of the language learner communicating in the language being learnt across varying situations (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). The concept of WTC was shown to be a complex variable, with differences being found in WTC inside and outside of the language classroom (see MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Conrod, 2001), as well as on the trait/state level (see MacIntyre, Babin, & Clement, 1999; Macintyre & Legatto, 2011).

Yashima (2002) expanded upon the MacIntyre and Charos' (1996) model of WTC in the first operationalization of International Posture. This inaugural study of the variable indicated that International Posture predicts Willingness to Communicate in EFL learners on a trait level, which has since been replicated in several studies (Aliakbari, Kamangar, & Khany, 2016; Ghonsooly et al., 2012; Matsuoka, 2005; Ulu, Weiwei, & Yu, 2015). Thus, the higher the positive attitude towards the international community and the need to use English to form part of that community, the more likely the language student is to be willing to communicate in English across a range of situations.

International Posture's predictive relationship with WTC has also reflected the complexity of the WTC construct. Peng (2015) found that International Posture predicts WTC both inside and outside the classroom, and Aubrey (2010) demonstrated the influence of International Posture on state-level WTC. It would therefore seem that International Posture predicts WTC in both state and trait-levels, although the state-level relationship may be less clear. No correlation could be found between state-level WTC and International Posture where state-level WTC was measured through the number of utterances in the English language classroom (Collins, 2013).

The inclusion of WTC within the nomological network of International Posture seems foregone, although the limited amount of studies prohibits further analysis on to what extent the full complexity of WTC is included in this predictive relationship. However, International Posture's positive predictive relationship with Willingness to Communicate does attest to the potential positive outcomes higher levels of International Posture can have in EFL learners.

Ideal L2 Self

The L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2009) introduces the concept of possible selves to motivation research in the foreign language classroom. A student learning an additional language may create imagined possible selves as speakers of this additional language. An idealized version of these possible selves (termed Ideal L2 Self) provides motivation for language learning as the student attempts to narrow the divide between their current perceived self and their ideal self in terms of language learning and proficiency.

Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide and Shimizu (2004) first argued for the inclusion of Ideal L2 Self in the nomological network of International Posture, as it was theorized that EFL students who have a motivation to belong to an imagined international community will possibly also visualize an English-using "self". Since this theoretical postulation, several studies have confirmed a medium to large and statistically significant positive relationship between International Posture and Ideal L2 Self (Kormos & Csizér, 2008; Munezane, 2013; Nishida, 2013; Peng, 2015; Yashima, 2009). Students with higher International Posture therefore more clearly develop possible English-using selves, which may result in beneficial learning behaviours (Yashima, 2009).

Motivation to Learn

The socio-educational model of Gardner (1985) theorises that integrativeness influences the learner's motivation in language learning. As International Posture is a revised form of integrativeness, it therefore seems a foregone conclusion that motivation should be included in the nomological network. Indeed, several studies have found support for this notion, with Yashima (2002) and Yashima et al. (2004) finding a predictive relationship between International Posture and motivation, where motivation was measured by the motivational intensity and the desire to learn English in EFL students. In addition, several studies have found large regression coefficients between measures of language learning motivation and International Posture (Elwood, 2011; Fallah & Mashhady, 2014; S. J. Kim, 2004; Munezane, 2013), with Poupore (2013) finding significant medium correlations between pre-task motivation as well as post-task motivation and International Posture.

Proficiency in Language

Unlike the motivational constructs or antecedents included in the nomological network, it is difficult to establish a direct relationship between proficiency in English and International Posture and as such, the relationship has been indicated by only a dotted line in the depiction of the nomological network (see Figure 3). Of the articles analysed for the systematic review, only three studies could be found that confirmed a direct relationship. Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Pietrzykowska (2011) found a positive but weak correlation in one subsample, whereas Kim and Kim (2016) found significant moderately positive correlations between International Posture and English proficiency for three cohorts of Korean EFL high school learners. In turn, Iwamoto (2011) found a significant difference in International Posture mean scores across different proficiency groups, with students in the higher proficiency group having significantly higher International

Posture mean scores. Rather than a direct relationship, the case for including proficiency within the nomological network of International Posture can be made in that International Posture may indirectly influence proficiency though motivated learning behaviour and other motivational variables (see Matsuoka, 2005; Yashima, 2002; Yashima et al. 2004). The relationship between International Posture and proficiency is severely under-researched, with the majority of studies not including a proficiency measure of English within the scope of the research. Further research is therefore needed to establish whether International Posture may have an indirect, possibly moderating, influence on proficiency in language learning.
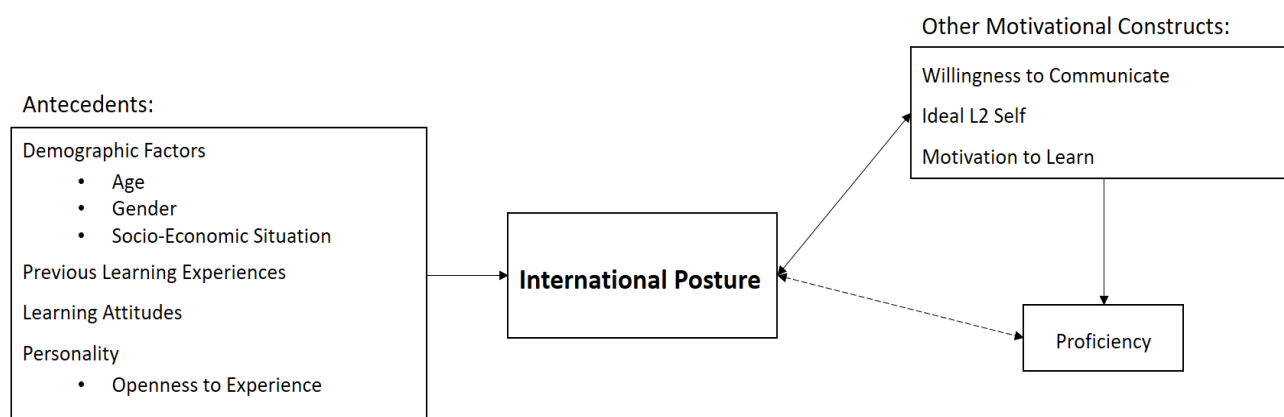

Figure 4: Nomological Network of International Posture.

The antecedents and the other motivational constructs discussed in this section are depicted within the proposed nomological network of International Posture (see Figure 4). The nomological network of International Posture and the numerous studies that expand upon and re-examine the variables that build this network, paint a promising picture of the validity and usefulness of including International Posture as a variable within EFL motivation research. This usefulness may be further extended by using the concepts of International Posture in the EFL classroom in order to increase the International Posture of EFL students.

MALLEABILITY OF INTERNATIONAL POSTURE

The depicted nomological network demonstrates that International Posture can be a key variable in the English language acquisition process. International Posture has a positive predictive relationship with several significant factors in the motivation of English language learners, as well as a possible indirect effect on proficiency in English. This brings the malleability of International Posture under question, for an increase in International Posture in an English learner, will possibly result in an additional increase in other motivational factors and perhaps even a rise in proficiency.

International Posture has been shown to be malleable in several studies. For instance, Aubrey and Nowlan (2013) and Aubrey (2015) demonstrated that students who had frequent intercultural contact experienced a significant increase in International Posture. Students who participate in study abroad programmes also experience a significant increase in International Posture average scores, with small to medium effect sizes (see Geoghegan, 2018; Lee, 2018; Meyer, 2008; Nowlan & Wang, 2018; Yashima & Zenuk-Nishide, 2008). The use of technology may also ease the means by which direct contact can be made with other English speakers. Ockert (2015a, 2015b, 2017) demonstrated that Japanese students showed an increase in International Posture after they communicated several times with Australian students in English over online video chat. Direct contact with an international community may therefore be beneficial in the development of International Posture as it creates a visible goal to get EFL learners invested in learning (Hayashi, 2013).

However, direct contact with an English-speaker does not necessarily have to occur in order to increase the International Posture of EFL students. The study by Yashima and Zenuk-Nishide (2008) included a group of EFL students who did not participate in intercultural interactions or student exchanges, but these students also showed a marked increase in

International Posture. This increase in International Posture was attributed to the students actively participating in the community of practice and thus further strengthening their imagined international community. In turn, Jiang (2013) reported a significant decrease in International Posture and overall motivation after 12 months of EFL language learning. International Posture levels of EFL students therefore seem to be susceptible to influence of the teaching practices used in the EFL classroom.

Yashima (2007) recommends linking classroom content and practices to an imagined international community by utilising global study content. Yashima and Zenuk-Nishide (2008) further echo this sentiment by proposing theme-based teaching that go beyond exam preparation in EFL. This creation of a social context in the EFL classroom should therefore positively influence the International Posture of an EFL learner and could also support and develop the overall motivation of the learner (Ushioda, 2006).

Classroom practices can therefore be amended and students encouraged to partake in intercultural experiences in order to increase International Posture and in turn positively influence the nomological network linked to International Posture. Thus far, a positive picture has emerged in terms of the potential outcomes associated with International Posture, further strengthening its inclusion as a motivational variable in EFL learning.

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH SUGGESTIONS

This narrative review was set out to examine the development and definition of International Posture, its measurement, its nomological network and its malleability in the English language classroom. Moreover, the narrative review aimed to illuminate areas of future research and provide possible directions for future studies.

The research discussed in this article clearly demonstrates the viability of International Posture as a motivational variable within the EFL learning context, as it has been shown to directly and positively influence the outcome variables of Willingness to Communicate and Ideal L2 Self as this narrative review has shown. Moreover, it is possible that International Posture may have an indirect positive effect on the proficiency in the language being learnt. However, future research would need to establish the size and the directionality of this important relationship. In fact, much is not yet known of the potential of International Posture as a variable to further the understanding of motivation in EFL learning. As such, three key areas for further research can be identified in order to expand the body of knowledge on International Posture.

Firstly, a common ground needs to be found in terms of the underlying design and operationalisation of International Posture. The design of International Posture to subsume both integrative and instrumental motivation as defined in Gardner (1985) needs to be re-examined and confirmed. Furthermore, a common operationalisation needs to be agreed upon. The measures currently in use are so diverse in terms of underlying design and measurement intent, to the extent that what is termed International Posture in one study may not be compatible with another. In addition, this validation of the measurement of International Posture should extend to include the validation of the Yashima (2009) measure, especially in regards to the redesign of the measurement model to separate the subscales into additional categories (see Figure 4). The most important gaps identified in the prevailing literature that ought to be addressed is therefore the replication of the proposed multidimensional factor structure of Yashima (2009), and the contrast and comparison of this multidimensional factor structure to the unidimensional International Posture composition proposed by several authors (see Ali et al., 2015; Kormos & Csizér, 2008).

This establishment of a base definition and measurement of International Posture should be accompanied by the second area of further research – expanding the nomological network. The antecedents of International Posture are severely under-researched, especially the demographic and personality factors. Future research that may prove fruitful would provide a specific focus on the possibility of gender and age influences in the scores of International Posture measures through invariance studies. In addition, further studies clarifying the effect of personality factors as an antecedent of International Posture are needed. The relation of International Posture to other motivational factors should also be further investigated, with specific focus on the ambiguous relationship between International Posture and proficiency in English. The relation between International Posture and proficiency in English can be seen as the true missing link in the prevailing literature, as an established direct or indirect influence of International Posture on proficiency development is needed to confirm International Posture's status as a variable of note in English language learning research.

Lastly, future research should include classroom implications and training possibilities of International Posture. The nomological network demonstrates the positive potential for students with high International Posture and as such, the design of classroom activities to increase the level of International Posture of students can be beneficial to EFL learning as a whole. The incorporation of activities to expand the International Posture of students in the curriculum and the benefit of these activities is highly recommended as an area of interest to practitioners and researcher alike. Such research also needs to extend to the role of the teacher in the classroom context of influencing International Posture development. Therefore, the prevailing gaps in literature that ought to be addressed as a matter of priority is both the extent of the malleability of International Posture as

well as the practical applications needed in the English language classroom in order to improve the International Posture of language learners.

The narrative review presented in this article is not without limitation. As the review has a specific focus on the measurement and nomological network of International Posture, the decision was made to exclude qualitative research in the systematic search. As such, the theoretical contribution made by qualitative research efforts in the development and definition of International Posture is not included. Future research on qualitative research in the field of International Posture is therefore recommended.

In summary, the expansion of knowledge on International Posture is sorely needed in order to understand the full extent of the potential and implications that International Posture may have for EFL motivational research. However, the rise of English as a global language (Crystal, 2003), provides ample opportunity to further the study of the unique aspects of language learning motivation within the EFL context. It was the aim of this narrative review to give the reader an overview of the current state of the art and to identify areas of future research.

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